Integrated Forest Protection Scheme (IFPS)

†*69. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the prescribed norms for providing grants to various States under Integrated Forest Protection Scheme (IFPS);

(b) whether it is a fact that the grant is not provided to various States on the basis of their forest areas;

(c) whether it is being considered to allocate grant on the basis of forest area under Integrated Forest Protection Scheme (IFPS); and

(d) if so, by when this process is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) and (b) Integrated Forest Protection Scheme (IFPS) was initiated during Tenth Plan. This scheme provides financial assistance on sharing basis for protection of existing forests. The financial assistance is made available for strengthening of infrastructure, preparation of working plans and other protection related measures.

The allocation of funds to States is determined by various factors such as demand projected by States, past performance in terms of utilization of funds, availability of funds etc. The grant is not given on the basis of the forest areas of different States.

(c) and (d) There is no such proposal.

Resolution of Kashmir problem

*70. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has received a proposal from the President of Pakistan, seeking resolution of the so-called "Kashmir problem" and affirmed to the media subsequently to be open to "new ideas" to resolve the "Kashmir issue";

(b) if so, the details of the "Kashmir problem" perceived, if any; by the Pakistani President in his proposal and/or that of the "Kashmir issue" as hinted to the media by the Indian Prime Minister;

(c) whether it is a fact that discussions/negotiations are being conducted at the official level between the two countries;

(d) if so, the objective thereof; and

(e) the road-map to achieve the same?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) In media interactions, the President of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf has made proposal on Jammu and Kashmir suggesting free movement of people back and forth, demilitarisation, self-government and joint management.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.